(i) The economic crisis in South East Asian countries and the consequent decline in outbound travel from these countries.

(ii) The general election in India and the slump in business traffic.

(iii) The general recession in many economies.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to attract more foreign tourists to the country during the last two years include continued infrastructure and product development, improved publicity and promotion including India Tourism Week. Tourism Expo, Buddha Mahotsav, etc.

Improvement of Services in Tourism Sector

1544. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has asked tourism Industry to improve services;

(b) if so, the reasons for unsatisfactory quality of service; and

(c) the steps envisaged to improve the services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) The Prime Minister in his speech on the occasion of India Tourism Day cited unsatisfactory quality of service as a reason for slow growth of tourism and expressed the view that tourism in India will flourish faster if all the service providers work with determination to improve the way they deal with the tourists.

(b) and (c) Lack of courteous and helpful attitude towards tourists results in unsatisfactory quality of service. The Government and the organised sectors of the Tourism Industry are, therefore, making efforts to overcome this problem by creating awareness and imparting training to personnel who come in contact with the tourists.

Availability of Tourist Accommodation

1545. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the target of 5 million tourists by the year 2000 has been reduced to 3.7 million by 2002;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether India has adequate rooms to accommodate these tourists; and

(d) if not, the efforts proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) The Working Group onTourism for the Ninth Five Year Plan has set a target of 8% growth in tourist arrivals till 2001. The tourist arrivals for that year are projected to be 3.37 million. If the same rate of grwoth is applied, the arrivals for 2002 would become 3.64 million. The target had to be brought down to realistic levels due to existing infrastructural constraints including transport infrastructure and basic amenities.

(c) and (d) There are at present 66522 functioning hotel rooms in the approved sector and 46866 hotel rooms in the pipeline. These rooms are adequate to accommodate the existing tourist traffic. However, a number of incentives are being provided for the construction of more hotel rooms in the private sector to meet projected growth in the tourist traffic.

Construction of Tourist Bangalows at Cheraideo, Gargaon Joysagar and Jorhat

1546. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the comprehensive plan taken by the Ministry of Tourism to develop tourism in North East;